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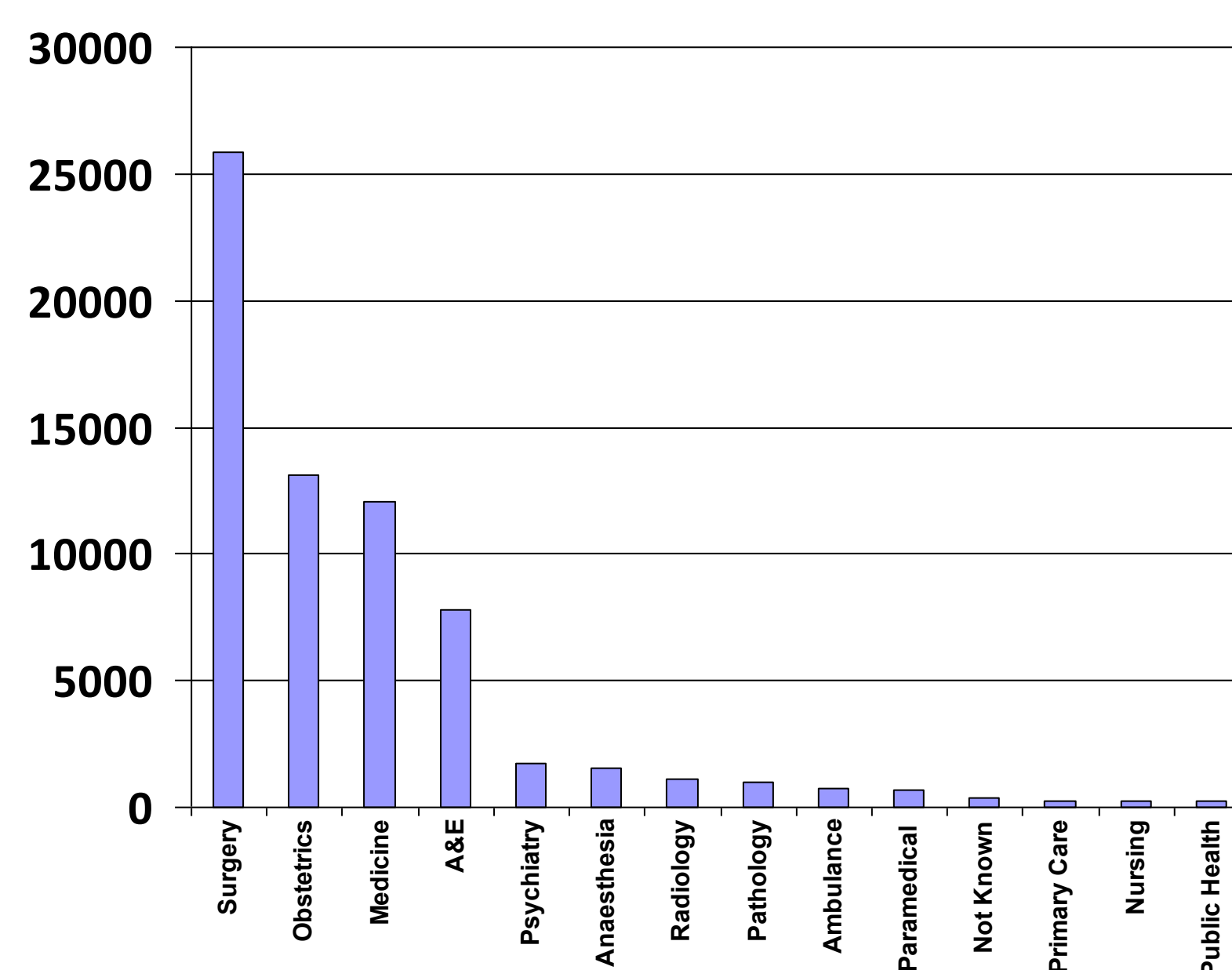
Law and the Midwife: Collaborative Working

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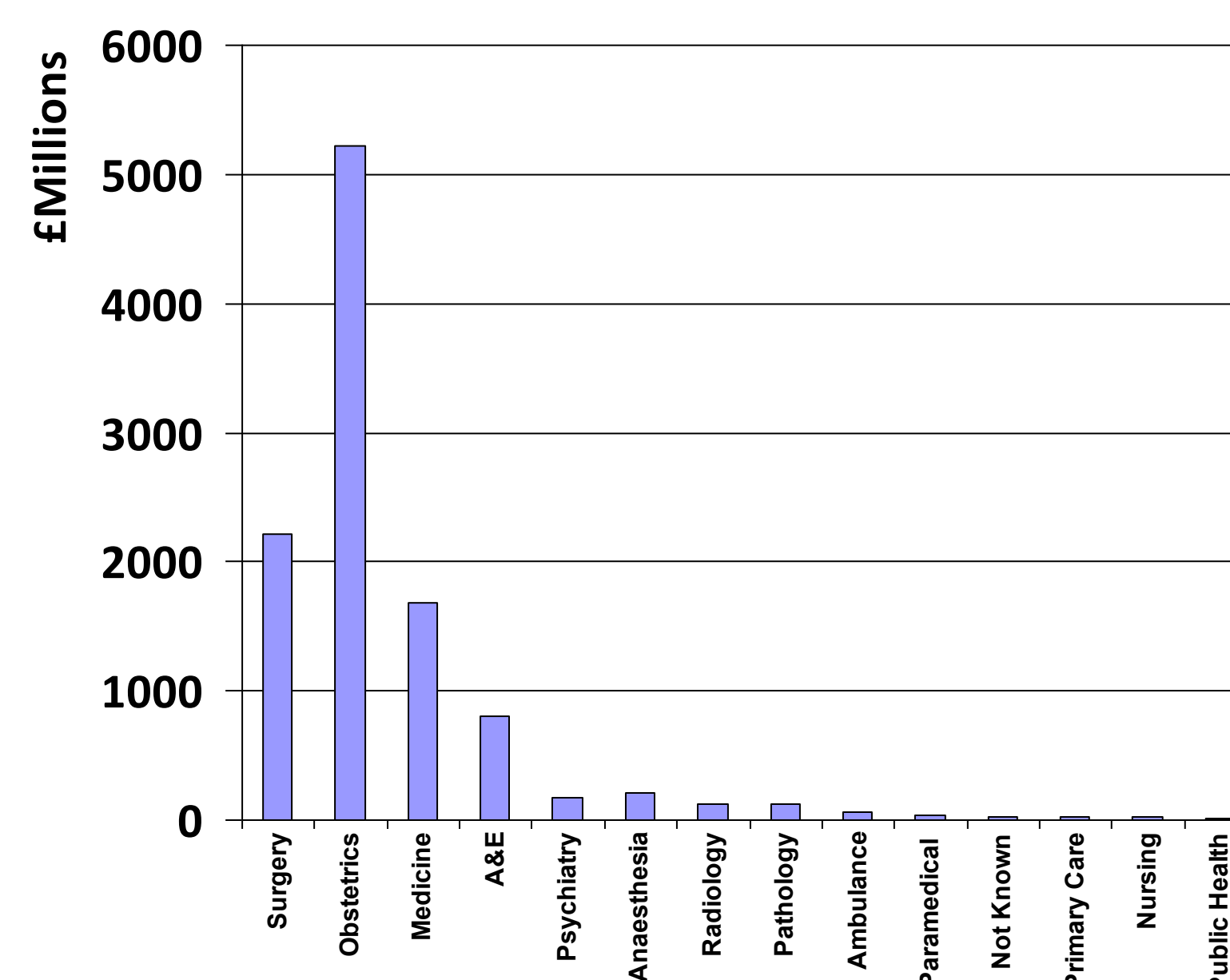
Obstetrics and midwifery are high risk litigious areas of health care Griffith et al (2010)*

Student midwives fear the prospect of litigation

Collaborative working between the Health and Law Schools



Total number of reported CNST claims (01/04/95 to 31/03/11)



Total value of reported CNST claims (01/04/95 to 31/03/11)

*In 2012 the NHS Litigation Authority (NHS LA) reported that maternity claims accounted for the highest value and represented the second most numerous claims under the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST). They note a figure of 1,300 obstetrics and gynaecology claims totalling over £5.2 billion between 1995 and 2011. The National Audit Office report £482 million was spent on maternity claims during 2012-13 (HC 794 8th Nov 2013 para 15)

Teaching events

Aimed at dispelling fears of litigation.

Aim for Law students to understand the practical perspective.

Inter-professional learning with law and midwifery students.

High profile cases were presented followed by analytical and reflective debates in groups. Positive feedback received from students.

The sessions were instrumental in drawing on both law and midwifery perspectives which produced lively discussions and offered a critical appreciation of legal and professional issues. Further sessions have been planned.

Health and the Law: Round table series

Evening events open to students and staff.

Members of the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) will be invited to speak about complex topics such as forced C/Section, vulnerable family issues, obesity and child protection issues.

Proposed to introduce students to early contact with the MDT to set precedents for good practice.

Utilising expert knowledge and disseminating evidence based practice.

Research plans

This proposed project explores to what extent midwives fear the threat of legal action in their practice, and if they do, what they fear.

It will investigate whether these fears match the reality of the likelihood of litigation as measured by the frequency and nature of clinical negligence claims brought against midwives.

Qualitative focus groups.

Objective is to identify strategies for supporting midwives in practice.